



# The Pileup

## Newsletter of the CDXA

### Summer Time on Peter One!

It is amazing how far south some folks will go to get away from the cold of winter, but going to 68.5 Degrees South Latitude is overdoing it just a bit. Yet, that is precisely what Wayne Starnes (KU4V)—one of CDXA's very own—will be doing when you read this issue of the Pileup. Wayne is one of the members of the Peter One (3Y0X) DXpedition team, and, assuming no “glitches” occur between the time this is being written and the second Wednesday in February, Wayne is NOW operating from Peter One with 20 of his comrades. The CDXA Roving Reporter went up to Cary, NC to talk with Wayne about how he got involved in this DXpedition.

**Roving Reporter (RR):** All of us were surprised and excited for you when we heard you were going to be on the Peter One team. How did this come about?

**KU4V:** Blame it on W4VHF! You may recall Ted forwarded a note about the DXpedition update from Bob Allphin and Ralph Fedor just before Thanksgiving 2005. In it there was a statement that the Peter One team had room for 2 more operators. I recalled seeing a similar DXpedition presentation at the

Charlotte Hamfest, and thought then, “if I ever had a chance to go on a trip like that, I would jump at the chance”. Well, I did. Working for the State of North Carolina you get salary increases as vacation time instead of US currency used at grocery stores, so I had enough accumulated vacation time required – 5+ weeks. I had just returned to a more active status in amateur radio. Knowing how well Bob Allphin plans things, everything aligned as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. I asked Cathy, “mind if I go to Antarctica to talk on the radio?” Ever since I signed on, things have been moving real fast.

**RR:** What's been happening?

**KU4V:** As you know, the Peter One DXpedition was scrubbed early in 2005 because of transportation problems with the ship. This was after CDXA's very successful campaign to offer financial support to the DXpedition. A lot of the work had already been done for the 2005 departure. In September 2005 there was a planning and training meet-

*(Continued on page 3)*

CDXA PacketCluster & Other Communication Systems		
W4DXA (11 mi. NE of Mooresville)	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second)	441.00 MHz (9600 bits/second)
K4MD Charlotte, NC	144.91 MHz (1200 bits/second)	Not Available on 9600bits/second
NG4DX (Digi near Galax, VA)	144.93 MHz (1200 bits/second) Connect to NG4DX, then type DX	
K4MD (AR Cluster via Telnet)	k4md.no-ip.com	
CDXA Repeater 147.18 MHz (+600 )	W4DXA, Near Fort Mill, SC	
World Wide Web Homepage	www.cdxa.org	
Wednesday Luncheon (11:30 AM)	Shoney's, 355 Woodlawn Road, Charlotte, NC (704-525-4395)	

## Charlotte Hamfest, March 11-12

Hang on to your hats, folks because the Charlotte Hamfest this year is lining up to be a great one. Besides the usual opportunities to get your QSLs checked for DXCC credit and renew old acquaintances, the forum schedule is outstanding.

Bob Allphin, Dave Anderson, and Wayne Starnes are scheduled to make one of the first presentations about the 3Y0X DXpedition following their return from PETER ONE. Consummate contester, Tim Duffy (K3LR) will be providing you with the "Anatomy of a Winning Multi-Multi Contest Station".

Saturday evening, we'll adjourn to the "Shanghai" restaurant for a closed party with some of the finest Chinese food in Charlotte.

What: Hamfest Dinner Party at Shanghai  
 When: Saturday, March 11 6:30PM (Social)  
 Dinner (sit down at 7:30PM)  
 Where: Quail Corners, Park Rd and Sharon Rd.  
 8418 Park Road, Charlotte  
 704-556-1688  
 Cost: \$18.95 (includes tax, tip)  
 Cash Bar (Beer and Wine, only)  
 Extras: Prizes to be given away!

Reservations, in advance, to Thomas Wright (N4HN).  
 (704) 536-9117, n4hn@arrl.net.

### The Pileup

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Published monthly 10 times per year, excluding the months of June and December.

The purpose of the association is to secure for the members the pleasures and benefits of the association of persons having a common interest in Amateur Radio.

Members of the CDXA shall adhere to "The Amateur's Code" as published from time to time in *The ARRL Handbook for Radio Amateurs*, and shall consist of those valid licensed amateur operators having an interest in promoting amateur radio. Long distance communications (DX) is of special interest to members of the association, but said interest is not a requirement of membership.

Dues are \$30 per year for those using the PacketCluster maintained by the Association, \$15 otherwise, payable each January. Dues are payable by check to the Secretary/  
 Treasurer: Cliff Wagoner, W3ZL  
 P. O. Box 577  
 Davidson, NC 28036

Address, telephone, and email address changes should be directed to the Secretary/  
 Treasurer at the above address or via email at: cliffw@adelphia.net.

## Don Gerald Brannan (K4SLC), Silent Key

Don Brannan, K4SLC, left us on Tuesday, January 24, 2006 after battling cancer for for nearly a year. Many of us had seen Don at a CDXA luncheon in late December. He was looking quite well, and his spirits were high that his treatment seemed to be progressing quite well. Unfortunately, he took a turn for the worse in early January.

Many members of CDXA had known Don for many years—some for as many as 30 years, long before CDXA came into existence. Don was a regular at CDXA luncheons for many years, only missing luncheons in the past year because of his illness. Don liked DXing—on both HF and VHF. Regardless of the band, if there was an opening anywhere to an entity that was needed, you'd find Don there in the hunt. Your editor was chatting with Don about a year ago about a "new one" seen on the air that very morning that he knew Don needed on CW. Don remarked, "That's in the Extra Portion of the band". Until that time, I had not realized that Don had earned his over 300 DXCC entities without being able to access the extra portions of the bands. That made his accomplishment truly outstanding. An offer to help Don with upgrading was turned away with, "I'm too old to learn that stuff." And yet, talking to Don, one knew that he knew his "stuff" very well indeed.

During the Eulogy presented by Don's daughter, Judy, she remarked that as an eight year old child she remembered the patience shown by Don as she twirled the dials on his ham radio. And, she added, "I always knew Dad was nearby, because his radio was always on, squawking, and squealing when he was home." Everyone in the family at the reception following the funeral service, remarked about how much Don enjoyed meeting "the guys at Shoney's". It was only fitting then, that almost a dozen of the guys from Shoney's were able to pay their last respects to Don on January 27. We'll miss you, Don. . . .but listen for our signals in the ether.



ing in Atlanta to practice camp and station setup. The freight container [11 tons] was packed and shipped. I will need personal crash courses on tent erection and container unloading after we are under sail. A 'quick strike' deployment is planned to get 2 stations on the air as soon as we can get on the Island. I missed all that.

Yet the planning and data exchanges still continued at a hectic pace. One day I had 27 e-mail messages from the expedition internal reflector and other informational reflectors. I've also been reading copious amounts of documentation which has been prepared by the team to document all aspects of the operation.

**RR:** What are some of the things you've learned about Antarctic living?

**KU4V:** Even though I'm a Carolinian, I'm not totally unaware of cold weather clothing requirements. Many years ago, I did a lot of VHF Mountaintopping with Ted Goldthorpe, Paul Trotter, Tom McAllister and other members of the Mecklenburg Amateur Radio society when they were involved in a lot of VHF contesting. Yet, preparing for the Antarctic where there is no warm house nearby in which to step when you're cold, raises the bar. First thing I did was to do a lot of reading about clothing requirements—layered dressing, properties of various fleece manufacturers, need for windbreakers, and need for "wicking" properties of fabrics to remove moisture from the skin to help prevent hypothermia. Yet humidity can be close to zero percent. It goes beyond just your clothing, too. You have to have preparations for your skin for sun, dryness, chapping, white-out conditions, and much more. It's a whole new survival ballgame, but at the same time a gauntlet challenge of the classic 'men and their machines'. We're fortunate to have a number of members of the team who have Antarctic experience under their belt. Ralph Fedor, K0IR, was on the 1994 DXpedition to Peter I. Everyone's experience has been really important to help me with cold weather outfitting. I have obtained more types of material than Ken Winston ever sold!

**RR:** I understand that the team has an "International" composition. Have you met your team?

**KU4V:** Yes. eight nationalities are represented. There are hams from France, Martinique, Switzerland, Poland, Norway, Russia, and The Netherlands in addition to the American contingent. I haven't met them all in person,

but daily by email and on Jan 8 and 15 we held on-the-air nets. We'll all gather in Punta Arenas on January 28-30. In addition to radio operators, we'll have a professional photographer with us to create a pictorial record of the DXpedition. [Can you say "Shackleton"!! That movie was a Christmas present from my 'loving' family]. The composition of the team is chosen to ensure the needed skill areas are covered—medicine, computers, Antarctic experience, etc.

**RR:** It looks from the bios on the website ([www.peterone.com](http://www.peterone.com)) that you and Dave Anderson (K4SV) will be the Information Technology gurus, then?

**KU4V:** Yes, that is the area where I was asked to help out. I have worked in Information Technology and networking all of my business career. Among other things, Dave and I will be networking the operating stations using the Writelog program and uploading the composite log for the online Web search. As you read this, and since you JUST worked us, thank Dave and me for the ability to see your contact within hours on the Web.

I will also be helping out in the 'kitchen' – remember the Pig Pickin's at K4MQG?

**RR:** How does your family feel about all this?

**KU4V:** They've been supportive of the whole idea since the beginning. In fact, at times I think they are as equally excited as I am. My daughter got caught up in the whole amateur radio thing once she started to see all my preparations. She decided to become a ham for her senior high school project. On January 14, she passed the examination for her Technician Class license, and she's learning the code now. It's amazing how fast young people can learn. She only started studying for the Tech exam the week before Christmas. The elapsed time I'll be away from the family, beginning to end, will probably be about 6 weeks. That's the longest I've ever been away from the family. Perhaps, if my daughter gets her General Class license, we can have a chat on SSB. (HI & Hint). Listen for KI4NGM in the pile up!!

**RR:** I think I've seen you more in the past two or three years than in the previous ten. You said earlier you're more active now than several years ago. What kept you away?

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

**KU4V:** Actually, it's only been in the past two or three years that I've been active again. I was real active in amateur radio in the Charlotte area in the 1970s and 1980s. I had a good antenna farm until hurricane Hugo came through Charlotte and made it a scrap metal pile. We built a house in Concord for the growing family. I had land but the young family and job became a focus then. I was transferred to the Raleigh area in 1998. That, along with the things parents must do while raising now teen-aged children has kept me from being as active as I'd have liked to be.

In August, Jim Miller, K4SQR was assisting a widow with an estate sale of an FT-1000MP. Ken Boyd LOVES his FT-1000MP, and it was a pleasure to operate during Field Day at Ken's QTH. I contacted Jim the same day I saw it posted. Participating with CDXA in the last two Field Days and the recent 'T-Shirt Challenge' really stirred up my interest again. I'm back – BIG TIME I guess, huh?!

**RR:** I'm sure there will be a number of CDXAers in the pileup looking for Peter One. Keep an ear out for us, huh?

**KU4V:** Absolutely. One word of advice - **Be LOUD!!!** On a closing note, I have known MANY CDXA members since 1979. We have had laughs and tons of fun, and shared many personal life events over the years. I want my CDXA friends to experience with me this once-in-a-life-time adventure.

### The Torch is Passed...

You may recall reading about Collin Webb (KI4LLH) passing his Technician License examination back in the September 2005 issue of the *Pileup*. For those who've forgotten, Collin was the then 10 year old son of Roger Webb, W4MW.

What was not disclosed at that time was Collin's desire to take on the callsign of his Grandfather. Well, that has happened, and the torch has been passed to the younger Webb. According to a note from Roger, Collin now has W4AAH as his callsign. We are sure both Grandpa and Collin are very happy that a Webb will be using this callsign for another generation. We will all be looking for Collin in the next VHF contest, proudly calling, "CQ Contest, this is Whiskey Four Alpha Alpha Hotel."

### The Toolbox

By Don Daso, K4ZA

*(Reprinted from the April, 2005 issue of the Potomac Valley Radio Club Newsletter, with permission—The Editor.)*

Recently, while on a job, I found myself in discussion with the station owner about the nature of concrete. It occurred to me that others might be as vague as this owner was about the true nature and use of this most-used building material—his description was a bizarre confusion of rocket science and pyramid building tactics. Or maybe I'm just too much of a pedant, an under-utilized academic? In any case, this month, we present a brief treatise on concrete and its application to tower bases.

#### The basics

In its simplest form, concrete is a mixture of paste and certain aggregates (fine, or sand, and coarse, usually pea gravel or limestone). The paste, which is composed of portland cement and water, coats the surface of the aggregates. Then, through a chemical reaction known as hydration, the paste hardens and gains strength, becoming what we know as concrete. This hydration process is the key or the real "magic" of concrete—it's pliable, plastic, and malleable when it's first mixed, but incredibly strong and durable once hardened. This simple, often-overlooked factor is why this material can be used to build anything from your sidewalk or patio, to bridges, dams, skyscrapers, or your tower base.

Having said this, it's probably obvious that the key to success in such a "mix" is the proportions and mixing process, and that's exactly right. A mixture without enough paste to fill in all the voids between aggregates will be hard to place correctly, and will be rough and porous when hardened. A mixture with too much paste will move easily and be exceedingly smooth, but will most likely shrink

Typically, the mix should be around 10-15 percent portland cement, 60-75 percent aggregate, and 15-20 percent water. Trapped air may make up 5 percent of the mix. Again, it's the portland cement that's the critical ingredient. Why is it called that? Because Joseph Aspdin, an English mason, who patented the product in 1824, named it that, after the color of the natural lime-

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

stone quarried on the Isle of Portland, in the English Channel. Portland cement is manufactured by heating a slurry of limestone or chalk with clay in a kiln, and then grinding the resultant clinker to a fine powder and adding gypsum.

### **Curing concrete**

After your concrete is mixed and placed, a satisfactory moisture content and temperature should be maintained while the concrete is “curing.” Proper curing guarantees quality concrete, and the curing determines durability, strength, water and abrasion resistance, stability, along with the ability to withstand freezing and thawing and chemicals.

Curing aids the hydration process, obviously. Most freshly mixed concrete contains considerably more water than required for hydration, but evaporation (on those hot summer days, for instance, just when you’re likely to be putting in a tower base) can delay hydration. The process is relatively rapid during the first few days, when it’s most important to keep the curing concrete moist. (This is why you’ll see burlap bags or sheeting or straw strewn across forms, or periodic spray applications of water, and so forth.) Good curing means you should try to prevent or reduce such evaporation. And yes, curing takes time—the recommended waiting period to reach full strength is 28 days!

### **Terminology**

#### **Aggregates**

Materials such as sand, gravel, or crushed stone that, along with water and cement, are essential ingredients in concrete. Aggregates account for 60-75 percent of the total volume of concrete. They are divided into two categories—fine and coarse. Fine aggregates generally consist of natural sand or crushed stone with most particles that will pass through a 3/8-inch sieve. Coarse aggregates are any particles greater than 0.19 inch, but generally range between 3/8 and 1.5 inches in diameter.

#### **Ready Mix**

The mixture of cement, water, sand, and coarse material. Ready mix is placed in a plastic state and will begin to harden or cure within a few hours.

#### **Reinforcement**

Concrete is reinforced with either wire mesh, or steel bars placed in a grid pattern. In either case blocks should

be used to keep the reinforcement in the center of the concrete. Note that reinforcement does not eliminate cracks—it simply holds them together.

#### **Slump**

A measurement describing the liquidity or viscosity of ready mix concrete. Low slump means the mix has low water content; high slump means high water content. Low slump concrete is usually stronger than high slump concrete but is less workable to place.

### **Concrete for Tower Bases**

Here’s what the Rohn catalog says:

- ◆ *Concrete materials shall conform to the appropriate state requirements for exposed structural concrete.*
- ◆ *Proportions of concrete materials shall be suitable for the installation method utilized and shall result in durable concrete for resistance to local anticipated aggressive actions. The durability requirements of ACI 318 shall be satisfied based on the conditions expected at the site. As a minimum, concrete shall develop a minimum compressive strength of 3000 PSI in 28 days.*
- ◆ *Maximum size of aggregate shall not exceed 3/4 inch; size suitable for installation utilized; or one-third clear distance behind or between reinforcing.*
- ◆ *Minimum concrete cover for reinforcement shall be 3 inches unless otherwise noted.*

Here’s what you need to know, do, or follow to comply. First, you’ll need to decide if you’re going to use ready-mix concrete—recommended for 3 yards or more. You’ll need to tell the supplier how many yards you require (concrete is measured in cubic yards).

Example: {Length (ft) x Width (ft) x Depth (ft) = base cubic feet}

Say your base is: 4(ft) x 4(ft) x 6(ft) = 96 cubic feet, and thus,  $96 / 27 = 3.6$  cubic yards required.

Be prepared—a cubic yard of concrete weighs 4000 lbs! The dispatcher will ask you for the rating. “Normal” concrete (sidewalks, patios, etc.) is rated at 3000 PSI compressive strength. For most normal bases, 4000 to 5000 PSI concrete will suffice. The dispatcher will ask you what “slump” you require. Checking with the terminology chart above, you see that “slump” refers to a

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

way of measuring the workability of the concrete mixture. The slump test is done to measure the consistency from truckload to truckload. Good concrete practice is to have around a 4-inch slump. The more water that's added to the concrete mixture, the higher the slump, then the lesser the concrete's strength and so on.

I always coat the tower legs where they exit the concrete with rubberized auto undercoat spray, and leave the center of the base higher than the legs or edges, to facilitate water runoff. The bottom of the hole is filled or covered with a gravel bed, again, to facilitate draining water from the round tower legs. I hope this brief overview helps you understand this terrific material a little better. What's in your toolbox? —K4ZA

### Will Nauru Become Rarer?

Active DXers are pleased that Roger Western (G3SXW) and Nigel Cawthorne (G3TXF) paid a visit to Nauru (C2) last Autumn. It is always a pleasure to work Roger and Nigel when they are on one of their DXpeditions. But the best part of working them is that you absolutely KNOW, like clockwork, you will get a full-color, high quality QSL card in no more than 30 days after the expedition is over. When I received Nigel's QSL card, I noted a large, abandoned phosphate loader pictured on his card. It brought back memories of AA4NN's recount of the now defunct phosphate industry he encountered on Banaba during his DXpedition there.

One of the reason's Banaba is considered "rare" is that it is hard to get to. If you've read Roger's Book, "Up Two—Adventures of a DXpeditioner", you know that Nigel and Roger choose their target locations using the following criteria: (a) high on the CW most wanted list, (b) warm, (c) reasonably easy to get to using commer-

cial transportation (no need for special charters), and (d) reasonable accommodations once you arrive.

An article appeared in the Weekend edition of the Wall Street Journal for January 14-15 that suggests Nauru will climb on the "rare" DX list in coming years.

Recently the island of Nauru lost its only plane. The U.S. Export-Import Bank, which lends money to developing nations that want to buy American products, confiscated Air Nauru's sole Boeing 737 for nonpayment of more than \$13 million in back debts and interest.

Nauru is only eight square miles in area and has ample coral reefs for snorkeling, diving and game fishing, but has only two hotels. The loss of a plane won't help it on the tourism front, and loss of the plane will be a huge blow to the approximately 11,000 residents of the island which is virtually without natural resources or industry. The jet had been used to import everything from medical supplies to food and is used to ferry people between the island, Australia, Fiji, and other nearby islands.

While Nauru was considered one of the richest nations per capita in the post-World War II era due to its strong phosphate industry, recent years have shown only a downward spiral. The rich phosphate deposits resulted from thousands of years of accumulated bird droppings. Phosphates are used in fertilizer and household products like laundry detergent and toothpaste. Similar to the situation in Banaba, over the last century forests have been clear-cut and extensive strip mining was done to get at the phosphate deposits. What was left was a lot of jagged exposed coral—and very little wealth to show for its former phosphate stash.

Nauru Phosphate Co. was supposed to place its profits in a trust that would support the island's population and fund new economic development as the mining business wound down. But many of its investments didn't pan out, and now the nation is bankrupt.

Upon reading the article, I sent an email to Roger Western with a copy of the article. Roger replied indicating that during their stay on Nauru, electrical power was very "spotty" and he and Nigel often found it difficult to find a place to eat—resorting to snack foods from a grocer about a mile from their shack for sustenance. Theirs were only about the 65<sup>th</sup> and 66<sup>th</sup> visas issued for visitors for all of 2005 by September. Roger also related that the plane often flew with only a few passengers, and that more often than not the passengers were government officials rather than tourists bringing commerce to the island. So, the plane flies no more, and Nauru is likely to climb higher and higher on the most wanted list in the coming years.

## Tower Works

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## The Search for a New Rig

By Bob Burton, N4PQX

I lost my TS940SAT in early October to lightning and found myself in need of replacing my main HF rig since mid-1989. Fortunately, a bit over a year ago I had decided to buy a TS480SAT as a backup/travel rig, so I still had a rig to use in the meantime. Having not looked at or used many of the newer HF rigs, I was at a loss for a rig which could replace my beloved TS940 as a full-sized rig. I had used the FT-1000MKV at Ken's (K4DXA) during Field Day, and I thought it was a nice rig so it was on the short list. Yet, I had never used an Icom HF rig. Dave Anderson, K4SV, kindly offered his personal IC-756ProII to me for a few weeks so I could get the feel of an Icom rig. This too was a nice rig so the current IC-756ProIII was also on my short list. Then came the Orion which was on the very top end of my price range. John (K8YC) invited me to come down to Discovery Place and test drive the Orion, which also netted me N3KS/KP5 on 20m during the test drive!

Since my main interests are now low band DXing and some contesting, receiver performance—especially crowded band receiver performance—was my main goal in my choice. That's where my research started, and it resulted in the table shown of receiver specs from actual tests, not manufacturer's claims. One thing that really stood out to me was when I had Dave's IC-756ProII and A-B tested with my TS480. I never could find a lot of receiver differences to my ear. A look at the table reveals these radios do have very close measured numbers despite being very different rigs. So now I took a good look at the rigs on my short list and the one that stood out was the Orion. At the various spacings the Orion's performance really doesn't change. No other rig in my prices range offered that level of receiver performance in crowded band conditions. I had also talked with Bill (W4ZV), Jack (W4TJE), and Todd (W4WTB) about the Orion, since they all own one. From those conversations it was clear that the Orion was tops on their list of receivers as well. Based on the true measured specs, I decided to order the Orion II.

Time will tell if I made the right choice, but I'm betting the numbers don't lie. Many Thanks to Dave (K4SV) for loan of his IC-756ProII and many other club members for their feedback and offers of loaner rigs when they thought I'd been put off the air by the lightning incident.

All 20khz and 5khz numbers all taken from ARRL product reviews and are the 14Mhz numbers using a 500Hz filter, preamplifier off. All 2Khz numbers are taken from the Sherwood web site: <http://www.sherweng.com/table.html>

Radio	20Khz <u>IMD</u>	5Khz <u>IMD</u>	2Khz <u>IMD</u>	20KHz <u>BDR</u>	5Khz <u>BDR</u>	20Khz <u>Intercept</u>	5Khz <u>Intercept</u>
IC-7800	104dB	89d	80dB	137dB	115dB	+37dBm	+22dBm
IC-756ProIII	103dB	77dB		121dB	101dB	+25dBm	-17dBm
IC-756ProII	97dB	76dB		118dB	100dB	+20.2dBm	-18.8dBm
FTDX9000D	99dB	95dB		138dB	127dB	+27dBm	+20dBm
FT1000MKV Fld	98dB	73dB	69dB	122dB	107dB	+20.3dBm	-5.2dBm
FT-857(orig)	86dB	67dB		109dB	96dB	+1.3dBm	-24dBm
FT-857D	88dB	68dB		122dB	96dB	+4.1dBm	-20dBm
TS-2000	94dB	69dB		126dB	103dB	+19dBm	-15dBm
TS-480	98dB	75dB		123dB	98dB	+26dBm	-18dBm
Ten-Tec Orion	95dB	92dB	93dB	129dB	130dB	+23dBm	+22dBm
Elecraft K2*	97dB		80dB	136dB		+21.6dBm	

\*Note: The K2 was evaluated by the ARRL before inclusion of 5Khz testing, however Sherwood's numbers show why testers and DXpeditioners like this radio's receiver.

IMD = two tone, third order IMD dynamic range BDR = Blocking Dynamic Range Intercept = 3<sup>rd</sup> Order Intercept

## Welcome New Member

CDXA welcomes Stan Dicks, W4AG, as one returning to the CDXA membership roster. Stan lives in Hillsborough, NC. We missed Stan's familiar presence on the roster for a year or so, but he's finally caught up with us once again. It's good to see you back, Stan.

## North Carolina QSOParty (Sunday, February 26)

By Dick Williams, W3OA

CDXA won the in-state club competition last year with more than twice the points of the second place club. Will we repeat this year? Surely we can if you, the members, decide you want to!

Here are the details. The contest runs from noon to 10 pm. EST on Sunday, February 26. The complete rules are on the Internet at <http://www.w4nc.com/pages/6/>. Like last year, we will be operating as W4DXA from Discovery Place. Parking will be free if you use the Discovery Place parking building. Our plan is to have two-hour shifts, two operators per shift. We will finalize this when we find out who is available and when.

For those who aren't familiar with the Discovery Place Amateur Radio Education Center, it is an excellent facility with a wide variety of operating positions for different activities. There's also a nifty plaque hanging on the wall acknowledging our first place finish last year. The main HF position has a Ten-Tec Orion running to a Mosely Pro 57 atop a 50 foot tower on the roof with additional dipoles for 40 and 80 meters. To avoid getting crossways with the Discovery Place information technology people, we have decided to supply our own laptop for use during the QSO Party and John, K8YC, has volunteered his. We have had success in using N3FJP's logging software in previous Field Day and QSO Party efforts so we will use that again. In an improvement over last year, the logging computer will be connected to the Orion. This will automate logging QSO frequencies and provide the ability to send CW macros from the keyboard.

Last year's results show that our CW operators were one of the keys to our success. Only one other in-state club showed significant CW QSOs. So it's important that we have a well-balanced effort between CW and

SSB. If you are interested in joining our operation from Discover Place, please contact Dick Williams (w3oa@adelphia.net or 704-658-0915). Let him know what times you can be available and your preferred operating mode. Please do this by February 15 so Dick can finalize the operating schedule.

And if you can't join us, please work W4DXA on as many band/modes as possible. The suggested frequencies are 3.540, 3.740, 7.040, 7.140, 14.040, 21.040, 21.140, 28.040, 28.140 for CW and 3.860, 7.260, 14.260, 21.360, 28.360 for SSB.

## Modern Technology, Who Needs It?

by Ron Bailey, AA4S

People keep asking me, "Why aren't you on the Internet?". Where shall I begin? There are Spam, Pop-ups, Worms, Viruses, Spyware, Porn, and endless streams of E-Mail—some from people you don't even know. You can have your identity stolen. You can have someone in a car outside your house using your in-home wireless system to log on the Internet. You can purchase hardware/software which is obsolete before you can finish reading the directions and installing it. Your computer can crash; your network can crash; your software can develop glitches or be incompatible with other components of your system. And tell me what happens if you don't have a clear view of the southern sky?

Oh yes, there is the monthly fee in addition to the cost of keeping up with advancing technology. If you have to say, "No." when your buddy asks you, "Do you have ... or can you ... ?", you immediately become one of the unwashed.

Now, let me tell you a little about my "Technology". I have a "Dial-up" telephone which only rings about once a week. (That "Do not call list" really works!) Even at that, I consider it an invasion of privacy. Needless to say, I don't need Call-Waiting! For Caller-ID I simply ask, "Who is this?" If I don't like—or can't understand—the answer (read language), I hang up. Rude but effective; they never call back! You want to talk "Digital"? My rotary-dial phone is as digital as it gets!

My security system is a Wal-Mart Baby Room Monitor placed outside my front door. This allows me to hear my redneck neighbors hitting the "Deer Xing" sign out

*(Continued on page 9)*



*(Continued from page 8)*

on the dirt road with empty beer bottles. Yes, the last part of directions to my QTH are, "Get off the hard road."

My antenna farm includes 7 beverage antennas. Aren't they 1920s technology? With them I've logged over 1600 medium wave broadcast stations in 12 countries and 37 states. Wait, don't those stations use AM? Furthermore, my black and white TV set has been very effective in receiving Mexican, Texan, and Canadian stations on channel 2 during E-skip conditions using rabbit ears!

Computers? Yes, I have 2 laptops (one with Windows 96 and another with Windows 98). I have a brand new desktop with Windows XP (Give me a cat's meow!). On it I have now won 55 games of "FreeCell" in a row. Don't tell me I've nothing to do! Well, I have to stop now and transfer this file to a 3-1/2" diskette and mail it to K8YC. -73 Ron, AA4S

*(Mailed on February 2 and received on February 3. Got it, Ron. Tnx. -The Editor)*

## A Good Mail Day...and More

By John Scott, K8YC

Every once in a while when the planets are aligned in the cosmos we go to the mailbox and find one or more of those awaited QSL cards for the "new one" that ups our DXCC entity count. Monday, January 30, 2006 was one such day. I should have known that the planets were aligned when Nigel Cawthorne, G3TXF, suddenly showed up on the previous Saturday in Mayotte giving me yet another new one worked, if not confirmed. A quick call to Gary Dixon to check his DAILY DX confirmed that, indeed, Nigel was in Mayotte.

Back to the mailbox. What awaited me was a QSL card confirming #300 from Kure Island. That was a real milestone for me, because it culminated an effort that began in April 1996 when I first started serving as a volunteer radio operator at Discovery Place. I had only 18 international QSOs at that time (after being a ham for 17 years!) and I had never seen a PacketCluster. I met a group of guys in the Carolina DX Association who delicately led me through the nuances of becoming a better DXer. And, what more could I ask for when receiving my Kure QSL card than to find the logotype of CDXA

proudly displayed in the centerfold of the QSL card. Not long before that, the CDXA logo appeared on the 3B9C card and, hopefully I'll be seeing that logo again on a card from Peter One Island (3Y0X) in the near future.

If you haven't looked lately, ladies and gents, we have a really great little organization in CDXA. We have a lot of folks who will take the time to "elmer" you to becoming a better DXer. We have lots of folks who give of themselves to make the club run. We've run a "tight ship" through volunteerism, our dues have remained virtually unchanged for years, and we've managed to provide financial support to several DXpeditions in recent years to keep our name in front of our "public". What more can one ask for of a DX club?

## Ten and Twenty Years Ago...

*(Extracted from archived versions of the Pileup available on the CDXA website.)*

### Ten Years Ago...

The editor of the 1996 newsletter, Tom Skelton, was extolling the virtues of going to Dayton (his first ever) and suggesting everyone should go at least once . . . ARRL had awarded over 200 DXCC certificates on 6 meters . . . The VooDudes of the Voo Doo Contest Group were thinking about Togo in western Africa for 1996. (We all know they've become a "fixture" of western Africa.). . . The Heard Island Team was on its way to bring VK0IR to life.

### Twenty Years Ago...

The editor of the **Pileup** explained that one of the hidden secrets of Campbell Island is that it is overrun with Norway rats! With no natural enemies on the island, the rats—introduced by seagoing men years ago—are out of control. (Wonder if 20 years has made a difference??). . . XZ, S2, C9, ET and 5U were countries that were nearly impossible to get because there were no authorized letters on file with ARRL/IARU that amateur radio operations were permitted. . . Some operators from 3B8 were going to spend 12 days operating at 3B9 and FR/G to the delight of amateurs everywhere.

## The Back Page

**Charlotte's Hamfest** is coming on March 11-12. Bob Allphin (K4UEE), Dave Anderson (K4SV), and our own Wayne Starnes (KU4V) from the **Peter One** team are on the docket for one of their first presentations after returning. As usual, we'll have our Saturday night dinner "blast". Details on Page 2, inside.

Are you interested in getting your very own **CDXA Embroidered** shirt, sweatshirt, or jacket? It has been about a year since our last order was placed with Land's End, and a few members have asked about getting new shirts. If you are interested, let Dick Williams (w3oa@adelphia.net or 704-658-0915) know so he can judge whether interest warrants putting an order together.

Your **dues** should have been received by Cliff Wagoner by now. For those of you who only remember to pay your dues at the Charlotte Hamfest, cash cannot be accepted because of security concerns. Those who have not paid by the end of March will be dropped from the membership roster.

### Upcoming Contests

Feb. 11-12	CQWW RTTY WPX	
Feb. 18-19	ARRL DX (CW)	
Feb. 25-26	ARRL 160m SSB	
Feb. 26	North Carolina QSO Party	(See Page 8, inside for details. Be sure to work the CDXA team, or better yet, join the team!)

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*See something wrong with your address label? Notify W3ZL at once, please.*